

March 25, 2025

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3800. This bill, if passed, would have severe negative impacts on our local agricultural community and economy.

#### Water Use Restrictions and Economic Impact

HB 3800 grants the Water Resources Department extensive authority to manage groundwater in the Harney Basin. This could significantly limit our access to water for agricultural purposes, potentially reducing crop yields and impacting livestock operations. The ability to modify existing water rights is particularly concerning, as it directly threatens the viability of our farms and ranches.

#### Increased Regulatory Burden

The new measurement and reporting requirements for existing water rights will add unnecessary administrative burdens and costs to our operations. Ranchers in the area are already operating on tight margins, and these additional regulations will further strain our resources.

#### Limitations on Growth

By allowing the department to decline applications for new groundwater rights for irrigation in certain subareas, this bill effectively caps our potential for growth and expansion. This limitation will hinder our ability to adapt to changing market conditions and meet increasing demand for agricultural products.

#### Concerns About Government Overreach

Our community has a history of challenging what we perceive as excessive government interference in local land and water management. HB 3800 appears to be another example of top-down regulation that fails to fully consider the needs and perspectives of local stakeholders.

#### Economic Disadvantage

These new water management rules could put Oregon ranchers at a significant economic disadvantage compared to those in other states with fewer restrictions. In an increasingly competitive global market, we cannot afford to be hamstrung by overly restrictive regulations.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider HB 3800 and its potential negative impacts on our ranching community. We need policies that support sustainable agriculture while respecting the rights and needs of local farmers and ranchers.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly York